

be uttered, a broad spread flash of intense light blazed from the flag's Drummond, for in passing to windward the noise of our paddles betrayed the proximity of a blockade-runner. 'Full speed!' I shouted to the engineer. Instantly the increased revolutions responded to the order. Then came the roar of heavy guns, the howl of shot and scream of bursting shells. Around, above and through the severed rigging the iron demons howled as if pandemonium had discharged its infernal spirits into the air. Under the influence of a terrible shock, the steamer quivers with aspen vibrations. An explosion follows; she is struck!

"'What's the damage?' I asked.

"'A shell, sir, has knocked overboard several bales of cotton and wounded two of the crew,' was the response of the boatswain. By the sheen of the Drummond lights the sea is so clearly illuminated as to exhibit the perils of our position, and show the grouping around us of the fleet as their batteries belched forth a hail storm of angry missiles. In the turmoil of excitement, a frightened passenger, contrary to orders, invaded the bridge. Wringing his hands in agony, he implored me to surrender and save his life and the lives of all on board. Much provoked, I directed one of our quartermasters stationed near me to take the lubber below. Without ceremony, he seized the unhappy individual, and as he hurried him towards the cabin, menacingly exclaimed, 'Shut up your fly trap, or by the *pourres* of Moll Kelly, I'll hold ye up as a target for the derision of them Yankee gunners.'

"As perils multiplied our Mazeppa speed increased, and gradually withdrew us from the circle of danger. At last we distanced the party. Spontaneously the crew gave three hearty cheers as relief to their pent-up anxiety, and everyone began to breathe more naturally. This was my tenth episode in running the blockade. During the night we were subjected to occasional trials of speed, to avoid suspicious strangers whose characters could not be determined. In fact, nothing in the shape of a steamer was to be trusted, as we entertained the belief that Confederates were Ishmaelites upon the broad ocean—the recipients of no man's courtesy.